



## Reasons to Buy Local Produce

### FRESH, HIGH NUTRITIONAL CONTENT

Local produce is FRESH. Since nutritional value usually declines with time after harvest, locally-grown produce is higher in nutrients, usually reaching you within 24 hours of harvest.

### DIVERSITY AND TASTE

Local farmers offer produce varieties bred for taste and freshness rather than for long-distance shipping and long shelf life. Fresh produce sold locally is usually picked at its peak.

### HELP THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

Food often travels thousands of miles before it reaches the consumer. Reduce your carbon footprint! Buying fresh, local produce grown near your home (without the use of large amounts of chemical fertilizer and pesticides) reduces carbon dioxide emissions.

### SUPPORT CONSERVATION AND FOOD SAFETY

Studies have shown that conservation practices on the farm, such as grassed waterways, filter strips and wetlands, filter water-borne pollutants, reduce food-contaminating pathogens and improve water quality. Ask your local farmers if they use conservation practices on their farm.

### HEALTHY SOIL PRODUCES HEALTHY FOOD

Biological farming promotes healthy soil that is characterized by a high level of microbial biodiversity. In healthy soils, food-contaminating pathogens have to compete with other microbes and are less likely to thrive. Compost, cover crops and crop rotations lead to healthy soils that produce healthy plants.

### THEY ARE NOT PROCESSED

The ingredients in fresh-cut produce (for example, processed pre-cut bagged salad) are sourced from multiple farms, increasing the risk of food-borne illness through cross-contamination. Pre-cut produce increases the risk of bacterial contamination by cutting into the leafy greens and breaking the natural outer layer of the leaves, opening pathways for contaminants. The sealed plastic bags the salads are shipped in may be an ideal environment for bacterial growth if they are not kept cold at all times.

### PRESERVE FAMILY FARMS, OPEN SPACE, AND QUALITY OF LIFE

Buying local supports family farms, strengthens the regional economy, preserves the local landscape and fosters community. When you buy local food, you vote with your food dollar. This ensures that family farms near your community will continue to thrive and that nutritious, flavorful food will be available for future generations.

For more details, please visit CAFF's website: [www.caff.org](http://www.caff.org)